

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.     A digital image selection method, comprising:  
2           obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical object;  
3           obtaining a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;  
4           examining the first digital image to determine if it is substantially blank;  
5           sending the second digital image for processing if the first digital image is  
6 substantially blank; and  
7           sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is  
8 not substantially blank.

1           2.     The method of Claim 1, wherein the physical object is a first of an  
2 ordered set of physical objects, the method further comprising:  
3           if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtaining a first set of  
4 digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first  
5 side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects and, sending the  
6 first set of digital images for processing; and  
7           if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtaining a second set of  
8 digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a  
9 second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and  
10 sending the second set of digital images for processing.

1           3.     The method of Claim 1, further comprising examining the second  
2 digital image to determine if it is substantially blank and sending the second  
3 digital image for processing if the second digital image is not substantially blank.

1           4.     The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of examining is  
2 performed before the step of obtaining the second digital image and the step of  
3 obtaining the second digital image is performed only if the first digital image is  
4 substantially blank.

1           5.     The method of Claim 1, further comprising discarding the first  
2 digital image if it is substantially blank.

1           6.     The method of Claim 1, wherein the steps of obtaining the first  
2 and second digital images comprise:  
3           scanning the first side of the physical object to generate the first digital  
4 image; and  
5           scanning the second side of the physical object to generate the second  
6 digital image.

1           7.     The method of Claim 1, wherein:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the  
3 second digital image to be printed if the first digital image is substantially blank;  
4 and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first  
6 digital image to be printed if the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1           8.     The method of Claim 1, wherein:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the  
3 second digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the first  
4 digital image is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first  
6 digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the first digital  
7 image is not substantially blank.

1           9.     The method of Claim 1, wherein:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the  
3 second digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if the first  
4 digital image is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first  
6 digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if the first digital  
7 image is not substantially blank.

1           10.    The method of Claim 1, wherein:  
2            sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the  
3 second digital image to be archived if the first digital image is substantially  
4 blank; and  
5            sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first  
6 digital image to be archived if the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1           11.    A digital image selection method, comprising:  
2            obtaining a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the  
3 first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object, the physical  
4 object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;  
5            obtaining a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the  
6 second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical object, the  
7 physical object being one of the ordered set of physical objects;  
8            examining the first set of digital images to determine if the first set is  
9 substantially blank;  
10          sending the second set of digital images for processing if the first set of  
11 digital images is substantially blank; and  
12          sending the first set of digital images for processing if the first set of  
13 digital images is not substantially blank.

1           12.    The method of Claim 11, further comprising examining the second  
2 set of digital images to determine if the second set is substantially blank and  
3 sending the second set of digital images for processing if the second set of  
4 digital images is not substantially blank.

1           13.    The method of Claim 11, further comprising reversing an order of  
2 the second set of digital images if the first set of digital images is substantially  
3 blank.

1           14.    The method of Claim 11, further comprising discarding the first set  
2 of digital images if it is substantially blank.

1           15.    The method of Claim 11, wherein the steps of obtaining the first  
2   and second sets of digital images comprise:  
3           scanning the first side of each physical object to generate the first set of  
4   digital images; and  
5           scanning the second side of each physical object to generate the second  
6   set of digital images.

1           16.    The method of Claim 11, wherein:  
2           sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
3   the second set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital images is  
4   substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
6   the first set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital images is not  
7   substantially blank.

1           17.    The method of Claim 11, wherein:  
2           sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
3   the second set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if  
4   the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
6   the first set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the  
7   first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1           18.    The method of Claim 11, wherein:  
2           sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
3   the second set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail message  
4   if the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
6   the first set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if  
7   the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1           19.    The method of Claim 11, wherein:  
2            sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
3   the second set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital images is  
4   substantially blank; and  
5            sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending  
6   the first set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital images is  
7   not substantially blank.

1           20.    A computer readable medium having instructions for:  
2            obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical object;  
3            obtaining a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;  
4            examining the first digital image to determine if it is substantially blank;  
5            sending the second digital image for processing if the first digital image is  
6   substantially blank; and  
7            sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is  
8   not substantially blank.

1           21.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the physical object is a first of  
2   an ordered set of physical objects, the medium having further instructions for:  
3            if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtaining a first set of  
4   digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first  
5   side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects and, sending the  
6   first set of digital images for processing; and  
7            if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtaining a second set of  
8   digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a  
9   second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and  
10   sending the second set of digital images for processing.

1           22.    The medium of Claim 20, having further instructions for examining  
2   the second digital image to determine if it is substantially blank and sending the  
3   second digital image for processing if the second digital image is not  
4   substantially blank.

1           23.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions obtaining the  
2   second digital image include instructions for obtaining the second digital image  
3   only if the first digital image is substantially blank.

1           24.    The medium of Claim 20, having further instructions for discarding  
2   the first digital image if it is substantially blank.

1           25.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for obtaining the  
2   first and second digital images include instructions for:  
3           scanning the first side of the physical object to generate the first digital  
4   image; and  
5           scanning the second side of the digital object to generate the second  
6   digital image.

1           26.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for  
3   sending the second digital image to be printed if the first digital image is  
4   substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for  
6   sending the first digital image to be printed if the first digital image is not  
7   substantially blank.

1           27.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for  
3   sending the second digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if  
4   the first digital image is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for  
6   sending the first digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if  
7   the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1           28.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for  
3           sending the second digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail  
4           message if the first digital image is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for  
6           sending the first digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if  
7           the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1           29.    The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for  
3           sending the second digital image to be archived if the first digital image is  
4           substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for  
6           sending the first digital image to be archived if the first digital image is not  
7           substantially blank.

1           30.    A computer readable medium having instructions for:  
2           obtaining a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the  
3           first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object, the physical  
4           object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;  
5           obtaining a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the  
6           second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical object, the  
7           physical object being one of the ordered set of physical objects;  
8           examining the first set of digital images to determine if the first set is  
9           substantially blank;  
10          sending the second set of digital images for processing if the first set of  
11          digital images is substantially blank; and  
12          sending the first set of digital images for processing if the first set of  
13          digital images is not substantially blank.

1           31.    The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for examining  
2           the second set of digital images to determine if the second set is substantially

1 blank and sending the second set of digital images for processing if the second  
2 set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 32. The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for reversing  
2 an order of the second set of digital images if the first set of digital images is  
3 substantially blank.

1 33. The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for discarding  
2 the first set of digital images if it is substantially blank.

1 34. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for obtaining the  
2 first and second sets of digital images include instructions for:  
3 scanning the first side of each physical object to generate the first set of  
4 digital images; and  
5 scanning the second side of each physical object to generate the second  
6 set of digital images.

1 35. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:  
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include  
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be printed if the first  
4 set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions  
6 for sending the first set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital  
7 images is not substantially blank.

1 36. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:  
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include  
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be incorporated in a  
4 facsimile transmission if the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions  
6 for sending the first set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile  
7 transmission if the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.



1           37.    The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second set of digital images for processing include  
3           instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be incorporated in an  
4           electronic mail message if the first set of digital images is substantially blank;  
5           and  
6           sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions  
7           for sending the first set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail  
8           message if the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1           38.    The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:  
2           sending the second set of digital images for processing include  
3           instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be archived if the  
4           first set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
5           sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions  
6           for sending the first set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital  
7           images is not substantially blank.

1           39.    A system for digital image selection, comprising:  
2           an image manager operable to obtain a first digital image of a first side of  
3           a physical object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical  
4           object;  
5           a content module operable to examine the first digital image to determine  
6           if it is substantially blank; and  
7           wherein the image manager is further operable to send the second digital  
8           image for processing if the first digital image is substantially blank and to send  
9           the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is not substantially  
10          blank.

1           40.    The system of Claim 39, wherein the physical object is a first of an  
2           ordered set of physical objects and wherein the image manager is further  
3           operable to:  
4           if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtain a first set of  
5           digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first

1 side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and send the first  
2 set of digital images for processing; and  
3 if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtain a second set of  
4 digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a  
5 second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and send  
6 the second set of digital images for processing.

1 41. The system of Claim 39, wherein the content module is further  
2 operable to examine the second digital image to determine if it is substantially  
3 blank and the image manager is further operable to send the second digital  
4 image for processing if the second digital image is not substantially blank.

1 42. A system for digital image selection, comprising:  
2 an image manager operable to obtain:  
3 a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of  
4 the first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object,  
5 the physical object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;  
6 a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of  
7 the second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical  
8 object, the physical object being one of the ordered set of physical  
9 objects;  
10 a content module operable to examine the first set of digital images to  
11 determine if the first set is substantially blank; and  
12 wherein the image manager is further operable to:  
13 send the second set of digital images for processing if the  
14 first set of digital images is substantially blank; and  
15 send the first set of digital images for processing if the first  
16 set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 43. The system of Claim 42, wherein the content module is further  
2 operable to examine the second set of digital images to determine if the second  
3 set is substantially blank and wherein the image manager is further operable to

1 send the second set of digital images for processing if the second set of digital  
2 images is not substantially blank.

1 44. The system of Claim 42, further comprising a reorder module  
2 operable to reverse an order of the second set of digital images if the first set of  
3 digital images is substantially blank.

1 45. A digital image production system, comprising  
2 a scan engine operable to generate a first digital image of a first side of a  
3 physical object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical  
4 object;  
5 a production engine operable to process the first and the second digital  
6 images;  
7 digital image selector operable to:  
8 examine the first digital image to determine if it is  
9 substantially blank;  
10 send the second digital image to the production engine if the  
11 first digital image is substantially blank; and  
12 send the first digital image to the production engine if the  
13 first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 46. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is an  
2 electronic mail engine.

1 47. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is a print  
2 engine.

1 48. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is a  
2 facsimile engine.

1 49. The system of Claim 45, wherein the scan engine, the production  
2 engine, and the digital image selector are all integral parts of a single peripheral  
3 device.

1           50.    A system for digital image selection, comprising:  
2           a means for obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical  
3 object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;  
4           a means for examining the first digital image to determine if it is  
5 substantially blank; and  
6           a means for sending the second digital image for processing if the first  
7 digital image is substantially blank; and  
8           a means for sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital  
9 image is not substantially blank.